

Meeting Minutes
VOI Community of Practice Meeting
June 28, 2016 | 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM
Call-in number: 800-779-9660 | Passcode: 542-9511#

***In attendance**

Jeffery Adkins (NOAA)*
Gary Anderson (NIST)
Sarah Cline (DOI)*
Denna Geppi (NOAA)*
Monica Grasso (NOAA)*
Karen Jenni (USGS)*
Jamie Kruse (East Carolina University)
Haydar Kurban (Howard University)*
Michelle McClure (NOAA)
Ben Miller (RAND)*

Marilyn Murphy (NOAA)*
Lou Nadeau (ERG) *
Toni Parham (NOAA)
Emily Pindilli (USGS)
Sarah Ryker (USGS)
Carl Shapiro (USGS)*
Ben Simon (DOI)
Adam Smith (NOAA)
Valerie Were (NOAA)*

Summary of Action Items

- **Community of Practice:** members are invited to review the draft objectives of the working group and provide written comments to Denna by **8/1/16.**
 - [Draft Objectives- Value of Information Community of Practice](#)
- **Community of Practice:** members are invited to send a topic suggestions (study or other substantive topic) to focus on in the next call to Denna by **8/1/16.**
- **Community of Practice:** members are invited to provide input on additional agencies and points of contact to invite participants.
 - [VOI: Spreadsheet for additional Points of Contact](#)
 - [Draft blanket email to send out to other agencies](#)
- **Community of Practice:** Members identify if they would like to be a part of the August focused organizational meeting for the VOI COP to Denna by **7/25/16.**
- **Community of Practice:** Member identify preferences for the VOI COP full group meeting to Denna by **8/1/16.**
- **Community of Practice:** Members continue to share VOI Studies.
 - Members can either add directly to the spreadsheet (below) or send to Denna.
 - [VOI Spreadsheet of Collected Case Studies](#)
- **NOAA Social Science Team:** Move forward with the PRSS Social Science Website, work with other Community of Practice members to decide how to represent the outputs of the working group.
- **NOAA Social Science Team:** Schedule August Organizational Meeting.

- **NOAA Social Science Team:** Schedule September VOI COP Full Group meeting.
 - Conduct outreach ahead of time to see if we can get others involved.
- **NOAA Social Science Team:** Edit and Release VOI Workshop Report.
- **VOI COP Organizational Group:** Develop work plan with short and long term actions.

Meeting Convenes. Roll call etc.

Setting the Stage

- Introduction of Monica Grasso, NOAA's Chief Economist to the Community of Practice.
- Introduction Community of Practice Members to Monica Grasso.
- Recap of the March 3rd Value of Information Workshop (Adkins/Shapiro)
 - 41 participants
 - Breakout session
 - Identifying Programmatic Needs: discussing **agency perspectives** and experience, key **weakness** of existing work and examples of **good work** to emulate. This session included discussion of what **questions** are being asked of program manager's OMB, and Congress.
 - Show and Tell Presentations:
 - recap of current status of VOI studies
 - upcoming actions in the Value of Information community
 - Paris GEOValue workshop, AGU fall meeting
 - case study discussing survey and Bayesian statistics
- Breakout Session
 - Identifying Methodological Needs/State of the Practice:
 - describe current practice and identify and
 - share state of the art practices
- Development of draft common criteria and set of standards for acceptable VOI studies
 - Four questions:
 - (1) how do we get answers quickly? (uncertainty)
 - (2) How do we characterize the program manager's' needs? (information needed to make decisions)
 - (3) What are the characteristics that constitute a valid VOI study from economists' sense? (minimum standard concept).
 - (4) How do we implement adaptive decision processes that incorporate improved VOI information as it becomes available?
- Group discussion: Cultivating a Community of Practice
- Two outcomes from this meeting that Jeff is looking for:
 - *Building a knowledge base, spreadsheet, annotated bibliography, and figuring out how we want to move forward*
 - *Broadening the group, determining who else we need in these conversations?*
- Three reasons this is important;
 - need for collaboration, and talk to colleagues, what has been done and what is being done

- continuing need for review, conflict between the need to do something quickly and the need to be rigorous; agreement on what constitutes a valid study.
 - visibility; an important area of research and we can make it more visible; open discussions; have seminars, etc. to get support and knowledge.
- This group is complementary to GEO Value, international group focused on geospatial information.

Recap of the May 4th meeting

- Recap of OCED Paris: Data to Decisions: Valuing the Social Benefits of Geospatial Information.
 - The ways to understand the benefits that come due to geospatial information and natural disasters to make decisions were discussed.
 - Most caucuses were interested in being part of this conversation.
 - GeoValue: The focus is the relationship between two communities.
 - This is a broad international community that meets every year or two.
 - The Value of Information Community of Practice relates to GeoValue in two ways:
 - The discussion in our group is more frequent and approachable.
 - We can serve as the US Community of Practice that feeds into the international GEO Value community.

Discussion of Collected Case Studies

- A Few Specific VOI Studies Discussed
 - Beaman, Lori, et al. "Profitability of fertilizer: Experimental evidence from female rice farmers in Mali." *The American Economic Review* 103.3 (2013): 381-386.
 - Shrader, Jeffrey. "Expectations and adaptation to environmental risk." Under development. Accessed at http://acsweb.ucsd.edu/~jgshrade/papers/forecasts_and_adaptation.pdf on July 13, 2016.
 - Volnaci:

Discussion of VOI studies from Participants

- Ben Miller:
 - An important benefit class for information is reducing the cost of false positives (warnings when nothing happens) and false negatives (failure to warn when something happens) (type 1 and type 2 errors).
- Haydar:
 - GDP impacts,
 - Adam Rose, University of SC
- Gary:
 - Listed a number of NIST studies
- Tracy:
 - We need to know whom our customers and stakeholders are.
 - NOAA is looking into a market analysis for its products and services: agree on concept, looking for good examples.
- Adam:
 - Reduce type 1 and type 2 error

- Carl:
 - Studies that show mechanisms but no empirical evidence?
 - Explain benefits that are well known.

Expand federal partnership

- NASA
- USDA
- Bureau of Land Management
- FWLS
- National Geospatial Intelligence Agency
- Ben: Other groups:
 - University of Maryland,
 - RFF
 - Howard
 - ESRI
 - Digital Globe
- Carl: Names from GPS study:

Plan for outreach with other federal agencies

- Use person contacts to reach out to these agencies.
 - Becomes easier to reach out to cold calls when it's operational.
 - First step, personal.
 - Then, comprehensively
 - Before we reach out, send email on who is who, who we're contacting.
 - Send the names, agencies to reach out to to Denna, or add to the google sheet.
 - Use the draft email (attached) to keep our message consistent.

Others outside the federal family:

- Insurance companies:
 - PCS and Re-Insurance;
 - what works for them; what doesn't work; why?
- This discussion led to an idea by Carl to hold targeted outreach calls for specific industries;
 - Moving to a programmatic agenda: core group involved in almost all the sessions and other will involvement on specific topics; insurance, electric power, etc. may not be interested.
 - This community sponsors web-ex presentations or on-site meetings focused on specific topics.
- Explore topics of interest.
- Support each other in doing the work.
- Discuss problems we're grappling with: programmatic perspective.

- Build our knowledge base.
- Sharing our own statements of work and work products.
- Get an execution plan in place.

Action Item:

- Create a work plan with a short-term focus on issue or issues; appeal to audience.

Ideas for topics to discuss on our next call:

- Karen Jenni:
 - Decision context
- Sarah Cline:
 - How to apply
- Ben Miller
 - use categories,
 - agricultural applications
 - application-based case study:
 - Methodology
 - particular method
 - level of rigor
- Societal benefits
 - on one hand; what changes; likelihood of change on one side.
 - another group of studies, don't look at societal benefits but impacts to economy—employment.
 - see some examples of those types of studies;
 - what was in their mind?
 - what do we need to include in study to address this?
 - we don't know what was behind the reasoning.
 - when do we need benefits;
 - when do we need impacts;
 - weather products;
 - 10-day and 5-day forecasts;
 - model improved resiliency;
- Number of studies on the value of satellite imagery:
 - Survey approach with broad benefits and others focused on specific value and use
 - How are the data used, specifically?
 - Macro vs. micro focus.
 - Need to drill down to value of use.
- **We could use a pair of studies,**
 - compare and contrast
 - when one or the other is needed
- Marilyn:
 - Hauke,
 - scatterometry data
 - NOAA publications

- user impacts
 - not claiming anything about quality
- Karen Jenny:
 - Different methods for ascertaining the value of information:
 - decision analyst
 - different approach for assessing the value of information
 - different from economic approaches
 - the basic thing is that in decision; decision analysis says information doesn't have value unless it changes a decision
 - tricky to value
- Interesting topic precautionary principle;
 - natural hazards
 - potential for earthquakes
 - evacuation plan high likelihood
- What is the VOI if next year we don't have the event;
 - we need to be prepared even if we don't use it
- Ben Miller
 - jelling those two different views
 - defining the use itself, potential value, insurance value, use is having it in your back pocket.
- We talk about decision-making, assumed level of decision-making, political, policy, some of the satellite assessments.
- Our group needs one place where we can exchange information
 - Tell people who are looking for studies what we have
 - Section on the NOAA website for this group
 - studies to put to the public that we have access
 - It is a good idea to develop a website
 - explore what would be included on that website
 - agencies have a button to access the VOI website
 - schedule of topics to discuss
 - Creating widgets

Next Steps

- Written comments on objectives
- Substantive focus for next call: topic
- Move forward website
- List of people to reach out to; agencies and Points of Contact
- Revise the Value of Information Workshop report.
- Work on Short-term and Long-Term plan
- First substantive meeting in September and have a more focused organizational discussion in August meeting

